

VZCZCXRO7855
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHRB #2218 3401429
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 061429Z DEC 06
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5341
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 002218

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/06/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MO](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: MOROCCO'S POLITICAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR IRAQ

REF: A. STATE 194422

[1](#)B. RABAT 1497

Classified by Political Counselor Craig Karp for Reasons 1.5
(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) A senior MFA official confirmed to us that Iraqi FM Zebari is due in Morocco for a 2-3 day visit on December 8. The Moroccans cautioned the USG against allowing Iraqi Sunnis to become marginalized from the political process and to be wary of any Iranian role in stabilizing the country. The GOM just concluded a two week training and capacity building program for a group of entry-level officers from the Iraqi MFA. This and other Moroccan efforts to strengthen the Iraqi government will continue. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) During a December 5 meeting in Rabat, Mohammed Azeroual, Director-General for Multilateral Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who also has oversight of Arab and Islamic relations, told polcouns that Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari will arrive in Morocco on December 8 for a 2-3 day visit. He was unsure of the details of the schedule, which was being handled at the highest levels. Stressing the GOM's strong support for the Iraqi government, Azeroual underlined that Zebari would be warmly welcomed and hosted by FM Benaissa, but was uncertain about a possible audience with King Mohammed VI.

[1](#)3. (C) Offering his "personal view," Azeroual, a 30-year veteran of Morocco's diplomatic service, urged the U.S. not to allow Iraq's Sunnis to become marginalized from the political process, Iraq's current upheaval notwithstanding. Such a marginalization would guarantee permanent instability in the country, he observed. Azeroual also cautioned against allowing Iran too much influence in the direction of the country. Noting his personal experience as Morocco's Ambassador in Tehran for five years in the 1990s, he stated "I know their psychology... They will be happy to play games in Iraq."

[1](#)4. (C) Azeroual and his deputy, Hassan Hami, briefed polcouns on the recent visit of 15 Iraqi diplomats, most new to the job, who were hosted by the Moroccan MFA for a two week training and capacity building program. This is the second batch of Iraqi MFA officials to be hosted and trained by the Moroccans. The GOM assumed the full cost of the venture, including air travel, accommodation, and board. The group was composed of roughly equal parts of Sunni, Shia, and Kurdish Iraqis, all of whom shared a vision for a united and modernist state. Azeroual said the first batch had been essentially Shia and Kurds, so the Moroccans asked for a more balanced group this time around.

[1](#)5. (C) Hami noted that the trainees spent the bulk of their time learning about the structure and operations of the Moroccan MFA, seeking best practices they could take with them back to Baghdad. Some of the Iraqis' most important moments were spent not at the MFA, but walking the streets of

Rabat on their downtime, Hami related. The tranquility and order they saw was a pointed contrast to what they have been experiencing in Baghdad, but reminded them of what Iraq could be like after the restoration of stability. As for the present, Hami observed, the young Iraqi diplomats were "terrified" of the direction their country was heading but "absolutely determined" to do their part to realize a better future.

¶6. (C) Azeroual noted that the GOM had been purposefully discreet, not wanting to expose the Iraqis to unwelcome publicity or politicize their visit. Azeroual expected more Iraqi diplomats would be trained in Rabat in the future, and predicted that the Iraqi Ministry of Youth and Sport will soon send a group to be trained and hosted by their Moroccan counterparts in the coming months. Without any specificity, he suggested that Morocco would continue to look at what else it could do discreetly.

¶7. (C) Polcouns noted USG appreciation for any and all assistance Morocco could provide to the Iraqi government. He assured Azeroual that U.S. policy remained committed to unity and cooperation in Iraq. Drawing from ref A, he underscored our determination that the government include all major players, including the Sunni.

Visit Embassy Rabat's Classified Website;
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/rabat>

Greene